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POPULATION TODAY™

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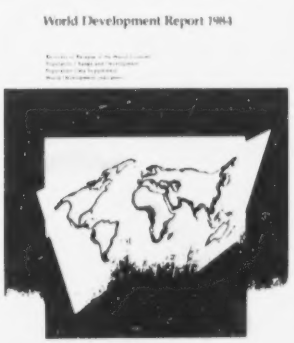
World Bank photo by Edwin Huffman

Boy in Ecuador, where mothers now desire three children as a median. See page 4.

A Publication of the Population Reference Bureau, Inc.

World Bank: Rapid Population Growth 'Brakes' Development

If you had space on your bookshelf for only one comprehensive overview of the world's present population situation and prospects, it would almost have to be the World Bank's just-published 296-page *World Development Report 1984.*



Each summer, the Bank publishes a substantive annual report that amounts to an extensive staff study of the economic "State of the World." The same essential basics are covered every year, including gross national product, the structure of production, and population. But each report also concentrates on a different theme—management in development (in 1983), agriculture (1982), etc.

Since this is the year of the International Conference on Population, the new Report's theme is population change and its links with development. Written by a Bank team led by demographer Nancy Birdsall, the Report covers the broad concerns of population issues in some depth, in addition to the Bank's usual scrupulous projections.

The Report also offers a primer on demographics and population history, and includes numerous mini-essays on a raft of population side issues—from the elderly in China to the potential and actual population-supporting capacity of Africa's land.

The bottom line of this year's Report is that, contrary to arguments in some quarters, "rapid population growth acts as a brake on development." The study argues in some detail that such growth indeed reduces investment available for the future; contributes to overuse of available resources; and hampers management of economic and social change. (As possible consequences, the study speculates that unemployment and "increasing landlessness" might overwhelm African and southern Asian countries' social and political institutions.)

Family planning programs, however, have shown success in many countries, and can make a difference. The estimated $2 billion spent annually on family planning is equivalent to about 1 percent of government budgets and 2 percent of foreign assistance, so that even small funding increases could make a significant difference. Another incentive might be for public policy to supply alternative ways (e.g., social programs, educational opportunities) for parents to secure the benefits that children have traditionally provided.

"Population growth does not provide the drama of financial crisis or political upheaval," writes Bank President A.W. Clausen in his introduction to the Report, "but its significance for shaping the world of our children and grandchildren is at least as great... What governments and their peoples do today to influence our demographic future will set the terms for development strategy well into the next century. Failure to act now to slow growth, Clausen adds, "is likely to mean a lower quality of life for millions of people."

The *World Development Report 1984* is available for $8.00 (paper), $20.00 (hardbound) from World Bank Publications, P.O. Box 37525, Washington, D.C. 20013.

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China's Birth Data Show Anomaly in Sex Ratios

A detailed analysis of 1982 census data and a massive 1982 fertility survey in China show a recent significant disparity in that country's male-female ratio at birth as birth order increases. This rise, which was measured in 1981 births, could be statistical evidence of ongoing female infanticide — or evidence that parents for some reason, possibly the country's rigorous one-child fertility policy, are not disclosing births of females. In any case, it's an anomaly.

These findings are part of a newly published study of China's 1982 Census and related data conducted by the National Research Council (the research arm of the National Academy of Sciences). According to analysis of the fertility survey, sex ratios varied as follows for 1981 births:

	Sex ratio (males per 100 females)		
	Birth Order		
Group	1	2	3
Urban	108.5	[117.8	for 2 and higher]
Rural	104.6	106.9	[112.4 for 3 and higher]

The worldwide sex ratio at birth is around 105 males per 100 females. Sex ratios may differ from this because of various reasons; i.e., China's 1981 urban figure of 117.8 may well be a simple statistical anomaly because of the tiny number of urban second-order-and-higher births in 1981 found by the survey: only 257 such births, out of a canvass of some 200,000 urban women.

But the rural figure is derived from a much larger base, and is less likely to represent a statistical quirk. Projected out, it means that out of a possible 1 million third-order or higher girls born during 1981, there are about 60,000 missing ones — missing because of infanticide, statistical oversight, and/or non-reporting. While the definitive answer may never be known, there is a certain logic in the explanation that parents, strongly encouraged by the government to limit births, might be more likely to practice infanticide on third-order female than third-order male children. □

Now It Costs $98,000 To Raise a Child

A typical middle-income American family with two children and a mother who works part time spends $82,400 (in 1981 prices) to raise a child to age 18, says economist Thomas Espenshade of the Washington-based Urban Institute in his newly published study, *Investing in Children: New Estimates of Parental Expenditures*. Adding four years at a public college increases the price tag to $98,000.

Espenshade's $98,000 total for 1981 can be roughly compared with the per-child totals for similar families he arrived at in earlier, widely publicized studies prepared for and published by the Population Reference Bureau — $85,000 as of 1980 (see INTERCOM, September 1980) and $64,000 as of 1977 ("The Value and Cost of Children," *Population Bulletin*, April 1977).

Espenshade's latest child-expenditure study is based on more recent information on family spending patterns — inflation-adjusted data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics' 1972-73 Consumer Expenditure Survey. Other new features are his exploration of variations due to a mother's employment status (working full time, part time, or not working); the timing, spacing, and birth order of children; and black-white differences.

Projections of future child expenditures at varying levels of inflation are a special feature. Espenshade calculates that if inflation holds steady at 5.2 percent a year, the spending per child through college in a typical two-child family where the eldest was born in 1981 will add up to between $196,000 (if the children go to state universities) and $232,000 (for private colleges). At 9.3 percent annual inflation, the total ranges from $275,000 to $310,000.

Fortunately, considering these eye-popping totals, parents' incomes will also rise with inflation. "There is no basis for thinking that children's consumption will comprise a larger fraction of total family consumption in the future than it does now," Espenshade writes. He estimates that fraction at 30 percent in one-child families, 40 to 45 percent in two-child families, and nearly 50 percent in three-child families. Three-quarters of the spending on children to age 18 goes to cover transportation, housing, and food.

Espenshade also finds that families with two parents working full time spend 23 percent more on each child than those with one working parent. If incomes are similar and family size the same, black families spend almost as much on children as white families do. Spending on children is higher in the West and Northeast than in the South and North Central regions of the U.S. and higher in urban than in rural areas. Per-child spending goes up if mothers delay childbearing from, say, age 22 to age 32, but Espenshade finds the difference "appreciable" only in high-income families (where both parents are college educated and the father holds a white-collar job).

Espenshade emphasizes that his estimates are of parental *expenditures* on children, not the *cost* of raising them "or some minimum level required for biological subsistence." He sees his estimates as guidelines for young couples considering parenthood, courts settling child-support awards in divorce cases, and for public agencies establishing payments to foster parents. His 124-page study is available for $11.95 from The Urban Institute Press, P.O. Box 19985, Hampden Station, Baltimore, Md. 21211. □

SURVEY REPORT

Ecuador

Ecuador, a Colorado-sized country, currently has South America's highest population growth rate. Modest declines in fertility have been matched by rising life expectancy to give Ecuador's 9 million population an annual growth rate of about 3.2 percent.

While half of the labor force is engaged in agriculture, the completion of the trans-Andean pipeline in 1981, which increased oil exports from the Oriente fields, surpassed bananas, coffee, and cocoa exports in importance. Growth in fishing and forestry has been good, but crop production has been hampered by uncertainties over price controls.

Ecuador's National Fertility Survey, taken in 1979 as a part of the World Fertility Survey, has now been released and provides a detailed look at childbearing trends in the country.

The survey reported a decline in Ecuador's total fertility rate (TFR) from 7.2 children per woman in 1965 to 5.3 in 1978. The 1978 rate is in close agreement with that reported by the national vital statistics system (5.2), a surprising result given that the country's vital statistics are usually considered to be incomplete. The survey report indicates that the survey results may tend to confirm vital statistics rates previously viewed with uncertainty.

Other survey findings point to potential for future fertility decreases and a moderately high level of contraceptive use. About one in three women surveyed were practicing a modern method of family planning, with the pill and female sterilization accounting for two-thirds of those users. An additional 10 percent practicing traditional methods brings Ecuador's current contraceptive use rate to 43 percent.

When questioned as to the number of children that they desired, the women gave 3 children as the median. Some 81 percent of the women in the Quito metropolitan area who had 3-4 children said that they wished to cease childbearing; this proportion dropped to one-half in the rural coastal section of the country.

Thus, Ecuador's WFS gives a picture of a country with slowly decreasing fertility and a rising acceptance of family planning—this in a country without an official policy on population. □

Falling Population Concerns West German Government

West Germany is one of several European countries (including Denmark and Hungary) experiencing a gradual population decline due to a decrease in fertility. The West German government has been following this trend for the past decade and in 1978 commissioned a working group on population questions under the aegis of the Ministry of the Interior, to study it and report.

The first report came out in 1980. A second report was published in early 1984 and news of it was covered in the February 1984 PT. A copy of this report has now been received by PRB (its cover is shown to the right). It describes in some detail the present demographic status of West Germany, and offers population projections as far into the future as 2030.

Starting with 61.55 million people as of January 1983, one of the study's more persuasive models shows a population of 59.14 million by 2000, and 45.7 million by 2030. This model factors in the foreign population and its fertility behavior, as well as future immigration.

It also sees West Germany's foreign population increasing as a proportion of the national whole. As of September 1982 there were 4.67 million foreigners residing in the country, 2.19 million of whom had been there for at least 10 years.

Bericht über die Bevölkerungs-entwicklung in der Bundesrepublik Deutschland
2. Teil:
Auswirkungen auf die verschiedenen Bereiche von Staat und Gesellschaft

The Ministry of Interior's *Report on Population Developments in the Federal Republic of Germany*.

Deaths have exceeded births in West Germany during the past 10 years. In 1982, among the native-born population, there were approximately 159,000 more deaths than births; however, the foreign population *grew* by some 64,000. According to the projection, by 2000 the foreign population will have increased to 7 million.

These projections assume that the West German population's fertility remains at current low levels. If that happens, the population will continue aging and increased demands on services and old-age institutions are expected, the report says.

Despite the shrinking of the West German population by 0.2 percent a year due to low fertility, the government does not expect any direct improvement in environmental problems. It views environmental degradation primarily as a function of economic activity and only secondarily as a function of population size. □

NEW FROM PRB

Since the late 1960s, life expectancy among the elderly in the United States has increased at historically unprecedented rates. By the year 2000 some experts believe life expectancy at birth for U.S. citizens could be as high as 80 years—74 years for men and 86 for women. While longer life is generally deemed a worthwhile goal, its impact on society and on the current system of public programs for the elderly could be disastrous.

"Death and Taxes: The Public Policy Impact of Living Longer," a new 16-page issue of PRB's Population Trends and Public Policy series, analyzes these life expectancy trends based on research first discussed at the 1983 meeting of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Several aspects of the anticipated "senior-citizens boom" are examined from a policymaker's perspective.

Current projections are based on the assumption that life expectancy will continue to increase at some fraction of the 1970s' rates which caught demographers and actuaries by surprise. All projections of the future growth of the elderly population between now and 2000 are relatively similar, allowing a fairly narrow range in which to plan. (After 2000, projections of the size and age of the elderly population begin varying widely.)

Striking a balance between research directed at eliminating the major diseases and at slowing the aging process is suggested. Federal research dollars directed toward heart disease and cancer outnumber funds for gerontology 20-to-1. Policymakers may be helping medical science achieve the dubious goal of keeping people alive well beyond their years of vigor.

Today the federal government is spending 27 percent (an estimated $218 billion) of its yearly budget on people 65 and over. This proportion could grow to an estimated 50 percent of the federal budget by 2025, say the report's authors.

Women are expected to continue to live longer than men. Single or widowed women are more likely than any other group among the elderly to be poor. The report suggests that research focused on diseases which disporportionately kill men could keep men around longer to provide for their wives and, as a matter of equity, also allow them to receive a better return on their Social Security payments.

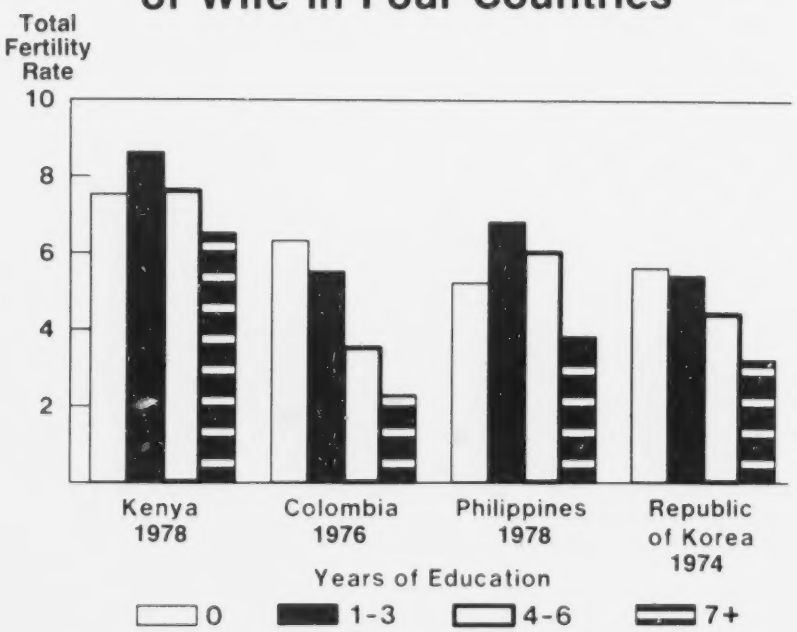
Prices: $3 per single copy; 2-10 copies, $2.30; 11-50 copies, $1.90; 51 or more, $1.50.

Population Handbook: Caribbean Edition. This 80-page version of PRB's popular *Population Handbook* presents the basics of demography, with Caribbean-region examples and data. Publication was funded by the UN Fund for Population Activities. The Caribbean Edition joins six other versions of the Handbook: the original, U.S.-oriented edition, the International edition, and versions in Arabic, French, French (Madagascar version), and Spanish. Prices: $4.00 each; 2-49, $3.50 each; 50-99, $3.00 each; 100 or more, prices on request. □

Order Information: Orders of $20.00 and under must be prepaid and include $1.00 for postage and handling. Send order and remittance to PRB, Circulation Dept., P.O. Box 35012, Washington, D.C. 20013. (Checks payable to Population Reference Bureau.)

SPEAKING GRAPHICALLY

Total Fertility Rate by Education of Wife in Four Countries



"In all countries, women who have completed primary school have fewer children than women with no education, and everywhere the number of children declines regularly (and usually substantially) as the education of mothers increases above the primary school level."

World Development Report 1984, published by the World Bank.

DEMOGRAPHER'S

How LDC Fertility Declines Stall—The Case of Tunisia

by Roderic Beaujot

This Demographer's Page is adapted from the 61-page original English version of the report, *Fertility in Tunisia: Traditional and Modern Contrasts*, by Canadian demographer Roderic Beaujot and Tunisian demographer Mongi Bchir, which is available postpaid from PRB for $10. An Arabic translation of the report has been published in PRB's Middle East Occasional Series.

Most Tunisians say a family of four children is ideal, preferably two boys and two girls. Four, they indicate, is the minimum it takes to satisfy the two main reasons for having children—because they are "the charm of life" and their parents' support in old age. At the same time, it is the maximum a couple can afford and properly care for. Four is considered a "small" family (although it is nearly twice the "replacement" fertility level of about 2.1 children per woman needed to stop population growth in the long run). As such, it seems to represent a compromise between the security of the traditional world's large families (and men's power over women) and the attractions of the modern consumer society, for which a small family is appropriate.

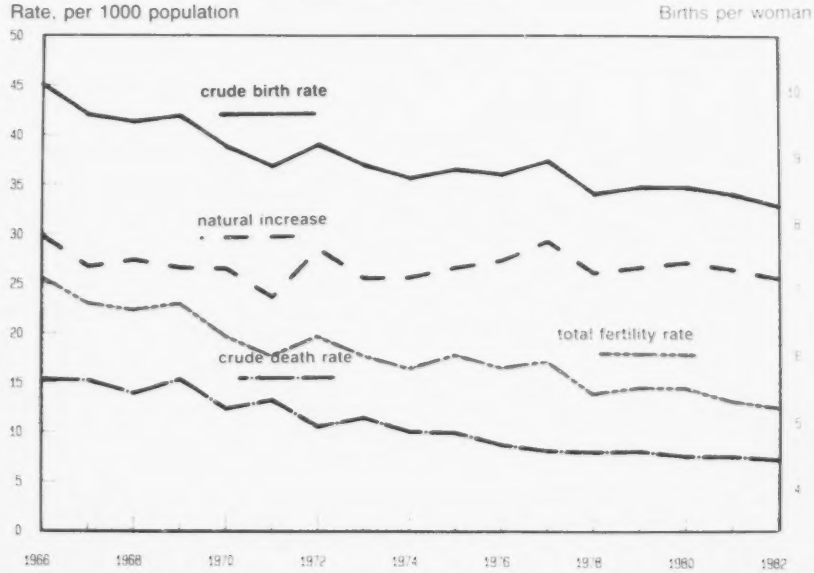
But ideals are not always achieved. Having children right after marriage is important and thoughts of attempting to limit family size come up only later. By then, the cost of a fifth child may not seem excessive compared to the bother and "health risks" of contraception, especially if the mother is at home anyway.

These were our main conclusions from in-depth interviews conducted in the spring of 1983 with 532 urban and rural Tunisians—222 men and 310 women. This included 185 couples where both spouses were interviewed. The survey aimed to explore why Tunisia's much-touted fertility decline has slowed since the mid-1970s, given its vigorous family planning program that began in 1966. A similar stalling of fertility decline at levels still well above replacement has also happened in other less developed countries (LDCs), such as Costa Rica, India, South Korea, and Sri Lanka.[1]

Between 1966 and 1976, Tunisia's fertility rate dropped sharply from 7.1 to 5.7 lifetime births per woman, but in the next five years edged down only to 5.2 in 1981, as seen in the figure. Much of the fertility decline has been due to rising age at marriage. The proportion of women still unmarried at ages 15-24 rose from 43 to 75 percent between 1956 and 1980 and women's age at first marriage has averaged a relatively high 22 years over the last two decades. Moreover, as the figure also shows, the decline in the birth rate per 1,000 population was matched by the decline in the death rate, so that natural increase (births minus deaths) in 1982, 2.6 percent, was scarcely changed from 1967. If continued, that rate would double Tunisia's estimated mid-1984 population of 7 million in just 27 years.

For Tunisia, the fertility plateau is particularly surprising. Spurred by President Habib Bourguiba—also leader in the struggle to achieve independence from France in 1956—Tunisia in 1964 became the fifth country in the world (after India, Pakistan, South Korea, and Turkey) and the first in the Arab world and in Africa to adopt an official policy to reduce fertility as a means to speed economic development. Launching of the family planning program nationwide in 1966 was followed in 1973 by legalization of abortion in the first three months of pregnancy and establishment of the National Office of Family Planning and Population with strong international funding. Contraceptive use rose from only 3.2 percent of

Birth, Death, Natural Increase and Total Fertility Rates
Tunisia: 1966-1982



PAGE

Roderic Beaujot is Associate Professor of Sociology, University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, Canada.

married women aged 15-49 in 1966 to nearly 30 percent in 1982, according to government estimates, and 41 percent in 1983, according to a direct survey of women which included traditional methods (withdrawal, rhythm, abstinence) not counted in government records. The IUD and female sterilization are the most popular methods.

The government family planning program has been accompanied by laws and trends that should increase the motivation for smaller families. In 1956, in a sweeping effort to modernize traditional family patterns and provide equal rights for women, polygamy and a husband's right to "repudiate" his wife were abolished and women's rights to divorce were introduced. In 1964, the legal minimum ages for marriage were raised to 17 for women and 20 for men. By 1980, infant mortality had dropped to 80-85 deaths per 1,000 births from the early 1950s level of 200, and 55 percent of girls were enrolled in school, compared to 44 percent in 1966. Per capita GNP rose by a healthy 4.7 percent a year from 1960 to 1982 when it stood at $1,390—close to the top among what the World Bank classifies as "lower middle-income countries."

Some observers attribute the fertility plateau to a revival of religious fundamentalism that emphasizes women's childbearing role. Ninety-nine percent of Tunisians are Muslim and many are now resisting Westernization and insisting that development should be guided by the country's centuries-long Arabic-Muslim history. Others say the family planning program may have lost credibility by exaggerating the benefits and downplaying the health risks of contraception.

When asked what they thought might explain the "resistance" to fertility decline, only 7 percent of survey respondents cited religious opposition. Thirty-seven percent felt it was because people don't know about or don't use family planning. Only 10 percent, in answer to this question, actually criticized family planning methods or services. In reply to another question, 95 percent agreed that the family planning program contributes to the well-being of families.

Respondents' views on family planning were not directly solicited, but interviewers reported that respondents spoke of problems with family planning (often after the interview) in almost half of the clusters of households visited. In their view, these were the prime explanation for the fertility plateau. The main charge was that contraception is bad for a woman's (or man's) health. This concern, the interviewers felt, stemmed from people's perceptions that available methods are inefficient and services poor; family planning personnel don't take time to explain the methods properly and travel distances to obtain services are often long. People are conscious of the cost of children and want to hold family size to what they can afford, but small frustrations with contraception and obtaining services are enough to tip the balance against family planning when they are also ambivalent about the ideal of four children.

The survey revealed other pulls between the traditional and modern worlds. Though women now make up 20 percent of the Tunisian workforce, only 4 percent of respondents said it was good for women to work outside the home. Half said women should work only if the family needs the money or child care is no problem, and 30 percent (46 percent of men and 18 percent of women) said it was not appropriate for women to work. Men often said no one can replace the mother to educate children and some said a wife loses her husband's confidence if she leaves home to work.

Although only a quarter of our male respondents said women should not have the same rights to divorce as men and just 10 percent disapproved of the abolition of polygamy, interviewers suspected that many more men held these views but hesitated to express opinions that would be contrary to law. Thus, despite laws designed to improve women's status, it is evident that Tunisian society, particularly men, remains rather traditional on sex roles. Women's status still depends largely on having children and their outside employment is considered unimportant or contrary to their primary roles.

On the other hand, two-thirds of our respondents favored the nuclear family of parents and their children living apart from the extended family and said their children would be free to choose their own spouses (which only one-third of them had been). This evident weakening of paternalistic authority and the power of kin groups over individual behavior is the most hopeful sign of future fertility decline. As couples come to depend on their own resources, they can become particularly concerned over the economic costs of children, and as nuclear families invest emotionally in each of their members, they are prompted to limit the number of children so each may have the best possible life.

But rapid population growth will continue so long as the average ideal remains four and many couples slip on to have a fifth child. Certainly, it is unrealistic to hope for a fertility rate of 2.3 births per woman by the year 2000, the optimistic goal assumed in the government's latest population projections. Even if fertility per couple does drop rapidly, the fact that 42 percent of the population is currently under age 15, with their childbearing years still ahead, assures population growth for a long time to come. □

Reference

1. World Bank, *World Development Report 1984* (Washington, DC: 1984) p. 71.

Note: The report on which this Demographer's Page is based, *Fertility in Tunisia: Traditional and Modern Contrasts*, by Roderic Beaujot and Mongi Bchir, is available for $10 postpaid from the Population Reference Bureau, P.O. Box 35012, Washington, DC 20013.

NCHS Tracks How Americans Live and Die

The National Center for Health Statistics constantly monitors the "vital signs" of the U.S.—from the basic vital statistics to the height, weight, and body measurements (gathered through the Health and Nutrition Examination Survey) that provide the clothing industry with the information used to size all types of clothing—from bikini swimsuits to spacesuits for astronauts.

Information is provided in many forms—from a detailed statistical report for a Senate legislative staffer to a few facts for a teenager's term paper. Most of the information is printed in reports, publications, papers and bound volumes, but another important medium for data delivery is computer tapes—especially helpful in surveys where as many as 5,000 data points are covered.

While the Census Bureau provides general demographic and economic information on the nation, the Center is one of the four other general purpose statistical agencies for the federal government which have a specific primary area. (The others are: Bureau of Labor Statistics, National Center for Educational Statistics, and the statistical systems of the Dept. of Agriculture.)

The data come from a variety of sources, including various surveys, and activities such as the vital statistics program, which is based on vital records filed in state vital statistics offices.

Surveys include the National Survey of Family Growth, which began in 1973. The most recent cycle, conducted in 1982-83, includes data on all women 15-44 including family planning practices and attitudes, maternal and child health, fertility, and related aspects.

The National Natality and Fetal Mortality surveys have been conducted since 1963, based on questionnaires mailed to a sample of mothers, physicians, hospitals and other medical care providers. One recent interesting facet of this study is the survey of the effects of maternal smoking and drinking on pregnancy.

This year the Center will complete a three-year survey of Hispanic Health and Nutrition. Another study gathered data on medical care utilization and expenditures. The National Health Interview Survey this year will have a special section on aging. (Other recent focus issues were alcohol, health habits, dental care, health insurance, prevention care, and child health.)

The National Death Index is a computerized index of death record information, compiled from vital statistics of each state, available for medical, death and demographic research.

Medical records from sample acute care hospitals throughout the nation are analyzed to provide data on patient diagnoses and characteristics, plus information on hospital size, location and ownership. Nursing homes and ambulatory medical care also are subjects of two other Center surveys.

The National Center for Health Statistics has been providing the nation with data since 1960. A catalogue of publications, as well as a catalogue of public use data tapes, explanatory pamphlets, and a number of reports are available without charge from NCHS, Public Health Service, 3700 East-West Hwy., Hyattsville, Md. 20782. □

U.S. Delegation to Mexico Picked

James L. Buckley will head the U.S. delegation to the International Population Conference in Mexico City, it was officially announced July 24 as *PT* was going to press.

The announcement culminated months of policy turmoil in the U.S. government over the constitution of that delegation and the statement of U.S. policy at the important UN meeting, which takes place Aug. 6-13. The other delegates announced were Alan Keyes, U.S. representative to the UN Social and Economic Council; William H. Draper III, president of the Export-Import Bank; Danny J. Boggs, Deputy Secretary of Energy; Ben Wattenberg, columnist; Jacqueline Shafer, a member of the Council on Environmental Quality; Assistant Secretary of State James L. Malone; Under Secretary of State Gregory J. Newell; and Agency for International Development director M. Peter McPherson.

The delegation appears to be a compromise, not naming several figures who had been the object of prior speculation: Amb. Richard Benedick, the State Dept.'s Coordinator of Population Policy, who is seen as favoring continuity in U.S. population policy; and Julian Simon and Jacqueline Kasun, economics professors who advocate generally "laissez-faire" population policies, emphasizing free enterprise development over family planning.

See next month's *Population Today* for a full report on the Mexico City conference. □

Hearings Held on New Population Policy

On July 25, Rep. Katie Hall's (D-Ind). Subcommittee on Census and Population heard a distinguished panel almost unanimously condemn the new White House policy on population, which was to be presented at the UN's International Conference on Population.

Critics included five Congressmen, Amb. Marshall Green, Joseph Speidel of the Population Crisis Committee, and Faith Evans of the United Church of Christ. Support for the policy was offered by Prof. Julian Simon and Rabbi Yehuda Levin.

Calling the new policy "naive and embarassing," Rep. James H. Scheuer (D-N.Y.) testified that a new policy was unnecessary and defied 20 years of bipartisan support for population activities. Rep. John Porter (R-Ill.) said that reduced support for population activities will actually lead to increased abortions.

WORLD FOOD NEWS

Three back-to-back crop failures caused by insufficient rainfall will raise the 1984-1985 food aid needs of six southern African countries by approximately 46 percent over last year, FAO reports.

The FAO/World Food Program Special Task Force on the African food crisis estimated that 1.35 million tons in food aid would be needed this year.

In its first attempt to survey the extent of international nonfood aid, the Special Task Force also announced support for rehabilitation measures valued at approximately $114 million to restore agriculture production and help prevent recurring food crises in disaster-prone countries.

"Donors and recipients are more and more convinced," noted the Special Task Force, "that disaster relief assistance on a purely humanitarian basis... will not suffice by itself for the full recovery of the affected populations."

The rehabilitation measures included $54.2 million to build up food production, $11.7 million to protect livestock, $18.1 million to aid transport, and $29.5 million to support other activity such as water supply improvements.

However, the Special Task Force continues to report a gap in pledges and deliveries of food aid urgently needed for the 1983-1984 season.

Pledges stand at 2.4 million tons, or 76 percent of the total needed, leaving a shortfall of 545,000 tons. This does not include the new estimates on food aid for the south, nor an additional $78 million that is required to assist in food production and the transition to regular development. □

World Food News is prepared by the North American Liaison Office of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations.

FAO photo by Y. Muller

Drought devastated this farmer's field in The Gambia.

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

One of the more difficult tasks in journalism is followup. This is doubly hard in population, where even nondemographic events tend to move with geologic slowness. We welcome suggestions and offer this update on Depo-Provera, whose use as an injectable contraceptive is banned in the U.S. by the Food and Drug Administration. The Public Board of Inquiry, which met in January 1983 (see INTERCOM Jan./Feb. 1983), is *still* considering the case, as its work has progressed much more slowly than planned. Nonetheless, announcement of its recommendation to the FDA is expected later in 1984.

—Art Haupt

Population Update

Estimated United States Population:

As of May 1, 1984	236,280,000
As of May 1, 1983	234,137,000

The above estimates include armed forces overseas and are from U.S. Bureau of Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P-25, forthcoming.

Estimated World Population:

As of September 1984	4,777,000,000
Annual Growth	82,000,000

Estimated by extrapolation of the mid-1984 population given on the 1984 World Population Data Sheet.

Latest Provisional Statistics for the U.S.: March 1984

	12 months ending with March					
	Number		Rate			
Item	1984	1983	1984	1983	1982	1981
Live births	3,619,000	3,705,000	15.4	16.0	15.9	15.9
Deaths	2,019,000	2,004,000	8.6	8.6	8.5	8.8
Natural increase	1,600,000	1,701,000	6.8	7.4	7.4	7.1
Marriages	2,457,000	2,494,000	10.5	10.7	10.6	10.5
Divorces	1,167,000	1,183,000	5.0	5.1	5.3	5.2
Infant deaths	39,600	41,200	10.9	11.1	11.5	12.3
Population base (in millions)	...	...	234.4	232.1	230.0	227.8

Note. Rates are given per 1,000 population, except for infant deaths, which are given per 1,000 live births. Rates are based on revised population estimates from the 1980 Census.

Source. Monthly Vital Statistics Report (Vol. 33, No. 3) from the National Center for Health Statistics.

OPINION

By Mohammed Shahidullah

I was surprised to read in the media, including the June 1984 *PT*, that "illegal" immigration was the reason for the recent building of the border fence between India and Bangladesh. In fact, there has been little recent migration into India from Bangladesh. After the creation of India and Pakistan in 1947, Hindus from East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) migrated into West Bengal and Assam in India and settled there. During Bangladesh's war for independence from Pakistan in 1971, there was temporary dislocation of Moslem and Hindu Bangladeshis who took shelter in the border districts of India but returned to Bangladesh when the war was over.

At present, the real conflict in Assam stems from political disturbances between the tribal Assamese and India's central government, which is exploiting natural gas there. From everything I know, the building of the fence is an attempt to make so-called illegal immigrants a scapegoat. It's unfortunate, I think, that the Western press gave a distorted, population-oriented picture of a situation that has little to do with population pressures. Migration to and from Assam has been part of the region's history and not a one-way traffic like, for example, Mexicans coming to a land of "plenty."

Mohammed Shahidullah is a PhD candidate at the Population Study Center, Florida State University.

TAKE A NUMBER . . .

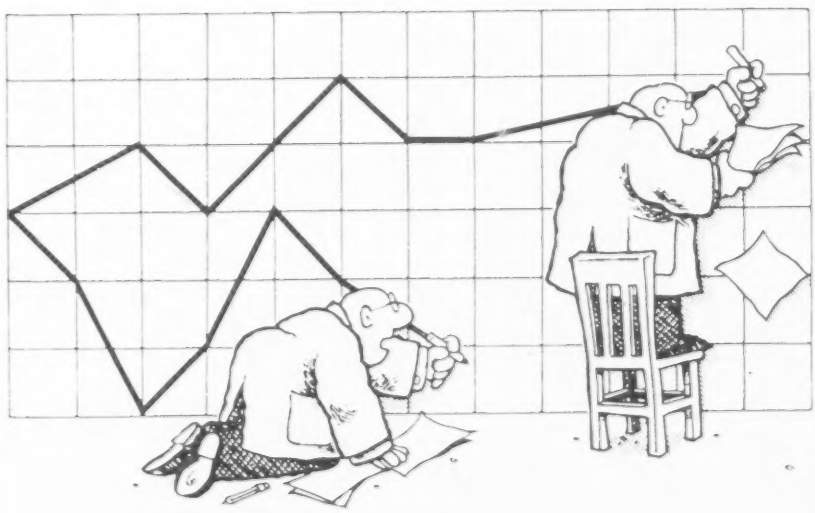
More on Declining Birth Rates: As noted in this space in the June *PT*, the birth rates of a number of developed countries showed a sharp drop in 1983 after holding relatively steady for several years. As more 1983 birth rates become available, this trend is further confirmed. Austria dropped from 12.5 births per 1,000 population in 1982 to 11.9 in 1983. Rates for other countries are: East Germany, 14.4 in 1982, 14.0 in 1983; Ireland 20.3 and 19.0, respectively (the first Irish crude birth rate below 20 in decades); Norway, 12.4 and 12.0.

A Surfeit of Centenarians: In 1982, there were about 32,000 persons in the United States who were 100 years or older, according to Census Bureau estimates. But that number is projected to rise tremendously in coming decades; the Census Bureau projects that there will be 108,000 in 2000 and 2 million by 2080.

Ouch!: While it is well known that men tend to earn more than women in similar fields, one would think that some occupations would be immune. Certainly a traditionally female group such as registered nurses would be. Not so, according to the 1980 Census. In 1980, there were 1.2 million registered nurses in the U.S., all but 52,000 of whom were women. But the median earnings of the male nurses were $16,764, compared to the females' $11,743.

addenda . . .

Illustration by Mark Taylor, copyright 1984 by the National Wildlife Federation, reprinted from the Aug.-Sept. issue of *National Wildlife* magazine by permission.



"Hey, I thought we were working with the same data . . ."

CURRENT READINGS

PRB welcomes materials on population topics for possible inclusion in Current Readings. Publishers may address review copies to Book Review Editor, POPULATION TODAY, Population Reference Bureau, 2213 M St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20037.

ONE BILLION: A CHINA CHRONICLE, by Jay and Linda Mathews. New York: Random House. 1983. 353 pages. $17.95. ISBN 0-394-50982-X.

One Billion presents a fascinating panoramic picture of China. The authors, former Peking bureau chiefs for the *Washington Post* and the *Los Angeles Times*, describe the Chinese, their customs, their sense of history, and the "system" they work in and often work around, in a way that helps Westerners appreciate life in that country. An example is the following description of workplace crowding: "Imagine your own office or factory with two or three times as many employees as it has now, working in the same space, with the same volume of work." Once you've picked up *One Billion: A China Chronicle* you'll find it difficult to put down.

—Patricia Cancellier

STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT: An Assessment at Mid-Decade. Washington, D.C.: The Conservation Foundation, 1984. 472 pages. $16.00.

This report from the Conservation Foundation, a nonprofit organization, assesses the U.S.'s environmental status in numerous areas, from cadmium pollution to interstate conflicts over water quality. It also reviews the underlying forces that shape environmental conditions, including economic development and (briefly) population trends. Regarding U.S. population, it notes current migration away from urban centers and associated pollution; and toward the Sun Belt, which has less polluting industry, but a dependence on auto transportation and future water problems of serious magnitude.

—Lisa D. Popik

THE RESOURCEFUL EARTH: A RESPONSE TO 'GLOBAL 2000,' edited by Julian L. Simon and Herman Kahn. Oxford, England: Basil Blackwell, 1984. 585 pages. $19.95. ISBN 0-631-13467-0.

Observers of the International Conference on Population should note with great interest the arrival of this compilation of essays, edited by Julian Simon and the late Herman Kahn, given the recent prominence of its themes and those of Simon's controversial 1981 book, *The Ultimate Resource*. (This new book has also been featured in admiring Mobil newspaper ads.)

This volume, supported by the Heritage Foundation, attempts to show that, contrary to the gloomy forecasts of the Global 2000 Report, the world will be better off 40 years down the road—perhaps because of, rather than in spite of, population growth.

Unfortunately, this text has many of the kinds of errors and misrepresentations of fact which the editors accuse the Global 2000 Report of containing. Simon writes in his introduction that the decline in the world's growth rate from 2.2 percent in 1964-1965 to 1.75 percent in 1983 has been a "broad decline over the bulk of all the poorer and faster growing nations" (page 26). In fact, the growth rate for LDCs excluding China has remained at about 2.4 percent since 1960, with mostly modest fertility declines in Asia and Latin America offset by increases in most African nations. (See "Speaking Graphically," in the July/Aug. *PT*).

In addition, Simon seems to confuse cause and effect when considering the relationship between economic prosperity and population increase, e.g., "Larger population size has been a clear-cut sign of economic success and has accompanied improvement in the human lot" (page 26). (If true, why shouldn't the world's most populous nations, China and India, also be the wealthiest?) Government economic interference is the all-purpose scapegoat cited to explain discrepancies between the population-equals-prosperity theory and the present state of the world.

—Amy R. Sheon

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SPOTLIGHT

MEXICO

Population (1984): 77.7 million
Pop. per sq. mile: 102
Births per 1,000 pop. (est. 1982): 32
Deaths per 1,000 pop. (est. 1982): 6
Infant mortality rate (est. 1982): 550 deaths per 1,000 live births
Annual rate of population growth (1982): 2.6 percent
Area: 1.978 million square kilometers (764,000 square miles), about three times the size of Texas
GNP per capita, (1982): US $2,270
Major exports (1982): petroleum, coffee, cotton, fruits, vegetables—$21 billion
Major imports (1982): grains, machinery, equipment, industrial vehicles—$15 billion

The highly advanced Mayan and Aztec civilizations thrived in Mexico until Hernando Cortes conquered these Indian empires between 1519 and 1521. The Spanish colony Cortes founded lasted almost 300 years. It was not until 1810 that Father Miguel Hidalgo proclaimed independence, an event which would culminate 12 years later when the Mexican Republic was created on December 6, 1822.

Mexico's topography varies from a low desert plain in the north to the great central plateau, 1500 miles long and, at some points, 500 miles wide. Mexico City, site of the 1984 International Conference on Population held this August, is 8,000 feet above sea level. A lack of rainfall throughout the seasons contributes to Mexico's relatively dry climate.

With its 78 million inhabitants Mexico is far and away the most populous of the Central American countries. its extraordinarily low crude death rate of 6 and high total fertility rate of 4.7 have in recent years led to soaring growth rates and mounting population pressures, as well as one of the world's youngest—17.4 years median age—national populations. Mexico City itself may very well be the largest single urban environment in the world. The United Nations, ranking the world's 25 largest agglomerations, has Mexico City surging to the forefront. It jumped from fourth in 1975 to third in 1980. Its population is projected to reach 25.2 million in 1995, a figure that would rank the city first, ahead of both Tokyo and Shanghai. Presently, Mexico City has over 15 million inhabitants.

Devastating declines in economic growth have plagued the Mexican economy since 1982. In 1976 Mexico, under the administration of President Luis Echeverria, had fallen into an international debt of $30.2 billion. The peso was allowed to float, and float it did—from 12.50 pesos to the dollar to a remarkably high 194 pesos to the dollar today. Inflationary pressures continue to hamper the Mexican economy.

Miguel de la Madrid, the new Mexican President and leader of the dominant political party PRI (Partido Revolucionario Institutional) was granted a $3.9 billion International Monetary Fund loan in November 1982, funding which he would use for his stabilization program. Currency controls were done away with. Increased prices on consumer goods and services have been implemented in an attempt to raise the gross domestic product.

Undoubtedly Mexico will experience drops in domestic buying power due to recessionary pressures. With plummeting local sales, Mexican industry will look to the export market in an attempt to beef up gross national product levels.

Government policy has been successful in reducing population growth. The 1970 to 1975 period was characterized by 3.2 percent annual population growth rates. Population programs were designed to reduce this increase to 2.5 percent by 1982 and 1.0 percent after 2000. Although replacement level fertility may be difficult to achieve by 2000, Mexico's growth rate has declined to about 2.6 percent as of 1982.

While Mexican officials attempt to reduce fertility, improve income distribution, restructure the agricultural sector and channel migration toward new areas so that no individual state grows at a faster pace than 4.5 percent per year, their efforts have not been unassisted. UN Fund for Population Activities direction and aid has been a significant facior since its initiation in 1972. UNFPA has been working on a project to aid the Foundation for Population Studies (FEPAC) with regard to family planning services.

The serious fiscal and social woes that confront Mexico today are serious, but, from a long-term view, hardly hopeless. Despite an arid climate, increasing arable land is possible, so that the country could raise more food not only to feed the growing Mexican population, but also boost the economy through increased exports. The recession has the potential, with financial packages in the form of loans and external aid, to recover from its acute spiral. □

World Bank photo by G. Franchini

Market in Alfonso, Mexico